

**BDAC Ecosystem Restoration Work Group
Meeting Summary
October 23, 1997**

The seventeenth meeting of the BDAC Ecosystem Restoration Work Group was held on Thursday, October 23 at the Resources Building in Room 1131 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

BDAC Members of the Work Group:

Roberta Borgonovo

Invited Participants in Attendance:

Gary Bobker
Pete Chadwick
Buford Holt
Tom Zuckerman

CALFED Staff/ Consultant Team:

Dick Daniel
Bellory Fong
Sharon Gross
Judy Kelly
Peter Kiel
Scott McCreary

Other Participants in Attendance:

Bill Alsop
Tiki Baron
Dan Craig
William Cunningham
Bill DuBois
Michael Gutterres
Tom Hall
Steve Hirsch
Liz Howard
Katy Howe
Brenda Johnson
Steve Johnson
Walter Kornichuk
Roger Masuda
Earl Nelson
Vickie Newlin
Stacy Ollman
Harrison Phipps
Harry Puckett
Karen Shaffer
Emily Tibbott
John Winther

Draft Meeting Summary

Roberta Borgonovo (Chair, BDAC Ecosystem Restoration Work Group) began the meeting at 9:10 a.m. with introductions and a discussion of the agenda. The primary purpose of the meeting was to discuss the outcomes of the Scientific Panel, summarize comments received on the ERPP, and to provide an overview of the Habitat Conservation Plan Scoping Meetings.

Scientific Review Panel - Overview of Deliberation and Next Steps

Scott McCreary, CONCUR, gave an overview of the Scientific Review Panel workshop held October 6 - 9. Scott described some of the changes in the format of the workshop. For instance, the Panel asked CALFED staff to change the order of the presentations in order to focus on issues of adaptive management before some of the more specific issues like setting targets or the scope of the ERPP. After day three, the Panel decided to convene in private to begin development of recommendations. The Panel returned on day four and presented some general findings.

The CONCUR facilitation team prepared a Summary Report which encompassed the Panel's six prime findings and recommendations, thirty-four additional findings, and a synthesis of the panel responses to each of the twelve questions. The final report prepared by CONCUR will be sent to CALFED on October 31 and to the BDAC Ecosystem Restoration Work Group on October 17. The Work Group's comments will be attached to the report and forwarded to the full BDAC for discussion at the November meeting. A Panel member, Michael Barbour, a professor in plant ecology at U.C. Davis, will attend the December BDAC meeting to clarify the recommendations.

Scott McCreary described the general tone of the Panel's recommendations and paraphrased the six main findings and recommendations as well as the Panel's responses to three of the questions. The Panel's primary findings and recommendations include:

1. clarify and define the restoration goal and approach of ERPP
2. simplify and focus the ERPP and base goals on conceptual models
3. involve outside independent scientists throughout the process
4. base adaptive management on continually developed conceptual models
5. monitoring program must be based on a foundation of testable hypotheses
6. create a standing science body comprised of agency, stakeholder and independent scientists

Meeting participants reiterated the need for ecological models. The ERPP has identified many components of the Bay-Delta but has failed to clearly express the relationships among those ecological units. It was stated that conceptual models are inherent in the document; what is needed are quantifiable models. Participants requested that CALFED present some examples of conceptual models at the next meeting.

Scoping Meetings. The HCP scoping period ended October 20. An HCP Scoping Report will be completed in early November. The major concerns voiced at the meetings include the following:

- complexity of CALFED Program
- timing of HCP
- programmatic "no surprises"
- assurances for federal contractors
- certainty vs. adaptive management
- long-term funding and monitoring
- public input
- need to ensure recovery of species
- shelf-life of "no surprises"

A meeting participant suggested that HCP assurances to State and federal contractors will shift the burden for getting water to the areas of origin. Area of Origin protection issues could push the HCP into a new legal realm.

Public Comment

One participant urged CALFED to not overlook the benefits derived from hydroelectric power, a public trust benefit. CALFED impact analysis examines aggregate hydroelectricity generation but does not distinguish the separate impacts to the state and federal hydro operations. CALFED should ensure that there are no significant redirected impacts and that competing uses like hydro power generation and environmental flow releases must be balanced.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the BDAC Ecosystem Restoration Work Group was scheduled for Monday, November 17, 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The Panel's recommendations are very constructive and focus on planning issues related to the ERPP, particularly to improve the conceptual scientific framework. A number of the meeting participants expressed serious concern that the ERPP, the crux of the CALFED Program, must be significantly improved. The primary concern is to create a solid, defensible scientific and planning framework. One person noted that we are committing nearly \$1.5 billion to ecological restoration yet have not given enough staff or money to the effort.

The Work Group suggested a number of steps to improve the document including:

- hire high caliber scientists and outside expertise like the scientific review panelists to help develop specific components of the ERPP
- hold focused workshops on specific, prime issues like flow, indicators, ecological models, etc.
- develop restoration strategies for distinct resource types
- bring the Work Group's recommendations to BDAC

Comments on ERPP

Dick Daniel summarized the major comment letter themes:

- improve general ERPP presentation
- expand scope to include all of San Francisco Bay
- fear that ERPP will take land and water rights
- salmon issues
- extend the public review period
- concurrence with Scientific Review Panel findings

The informal public review period for the ERPP ended October 14. Many reviewers requested an extension of the comment period with the belief that October 14 was a legal deadline. The October 14 deadline was only a document planning target and comments received after the deadline will be reviewed and all attempts will be made to incorporate those for the EIS/EIR. Since the public will have the opportunity to review the ERPP in the EIS/EIR, the review period will not be extended. Also, given the programmatic level of the ERPP, it is not necessary to solicit detailed region-specific information.

Meeting participants asked when and to what extent the ERPP would be rewritten. Volume III was released as a working draft and will be rewritten with suggestions from the Scientific Review Panel. Some thought that all three volumes should be rewritten to produce a clear, comprehensive document, others thought a Volume IV would be sufficient. Most public comments received on the ERPP are very specific and not programmatic in nature, and therefore if not incorporated, would not affect issuance of the Programmatic EIS/EIR.

Overview of HCP Scoping Meeting Comments

Sharon Gross summarized the comments received from the four Habitat Conservation Plan